

Org. 1 Nat'l Alliance  
of Russian Solidarists

# THE UNDERGROUND MOSCOW FEARS MOST

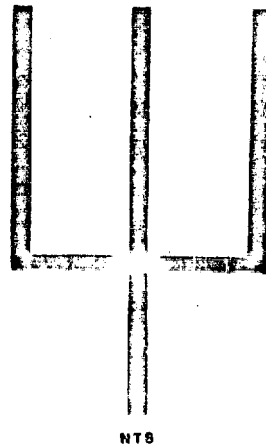
This little-known organization, composed of Free World Russian émigrés and patriots at home, has been under the skin of Red rulers since 1930.

By EUGENE LYONS

ON APRIL 18, 1965, a young British teacher, Gerald Brooke, in Moscow as a tourist, dropped a letter in a mailbox. A week later he was arrested and on July 21 he was put on trial. Three months in the clutches of the Secret Police evidently had softened him sufficiently for public display—he confessed, abjectly “repented” his sins and on July 23 was given a five-year prison sentence.

The letter and others he posted while under surveillance were sent to known patriotic Russian anticommunists [note that phrase] in many parts of the country. They contained suggestions, instructions and thin rubber matrices for printing pro-Russian anticommunist leaflets at home. The addresses and contents had been supplied in London by the National Alliance of Russian Solidarists, an émigré society better known by its initials: NTS.

This much was true and readily confirmed at the organization headquarters in Frankfurt, West Germany. NTS makes no secret of the fact that it uses willing visitors to the U.S.S.R. to disseminate its anti-Soviet literature. Brooke was among more than a hundred men and women who in the preceding two years posted NTS printed matter to known sympathizers as well as Soviet addresses picked at random from newspapers, directories and other innocent sources. Having spent ten months in



NTS

The underground's symbol. Prongs represent workers, peasants, intellectuals.

Moscow as an exchange student, he was moved by the plight of the people under communism and on returning home volunteered to cooperate with NTS.

On this peg of truth, however, the prosecution proceeded to hang an elaborate propaganda fantasy. Brooke was pictured as a tool of Western Intelligence engaged in espionage and terror through the émigré organization. The Soviet press fulminated not only against “traitors to the Motherland” at home and among Russians abroad, but tied them, without a shred of proof, into the American C.I.A. and Western governments generally.

Though the British teacher's “crime” was picayune, he was tried in a large auditorium complete with klieg lights,

microphones and cameras. Large audiences were marched into the hall in relays from factories and offices. Brooke, in short, was accorded an old-style “demonstration trial,” the kind of spectacle in which the prosecution, defense, judges and the brainwashed defendant all work together to make a propaganda show.

This device, familiar in the Stalin era, has been used sparingly in recent years. Its revival in the Brooke case indicates that the Kremlin had purposes beyond the punishment of one man caught mailing anti-regime letters. A secondary objective was to alert the citizenry again to the dire dangers of fraternizing with foreigners, but the primary objective was to discredit the NTS in the eyes of the people.

This was not the first time the Soviet Government had felt itself compelled to publicize the NTS. On several occasions it had staged press “interviews” with captured members—after they had been drilled to give the proper answers—before packing them off to concentration camps or death cellars. The Soviet press had repeatedly abused the organization in hysterical terms. But this was the first time it accorded the NTS the supreme compliment, from the society's standpoint, of a demonstration trial.

In May 1964, to cite random examples of attacks in the Soviet press, Molody Kommunist denounced NTS broadcasts “filled with undisguised slander, provocative appeals, all sorts of instructions on

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Орган Центрального Комитета  
Коммунистической партии Советского Союза

Год издания 41-й  
№ 4 (14429)  
Суббота, 4 января 1958 года  
Цена 20 коп.

THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE • APRIL 1966 9

CONTINUED

# THE UNDERGROUND MOSCOW FEARS MOST

NTS leaders in other countries were naturally distressed by the fate of their British friend—another name added to the long roster of martyrs for their cause. But they did not hide their satisfaction with the Brooke affair as additional proof that the Kremlin takes their organization, dedicated to nurturing revolution in Russia, most seriously. Said Constantin Boldyreff, top NTS spokesman in the United States:

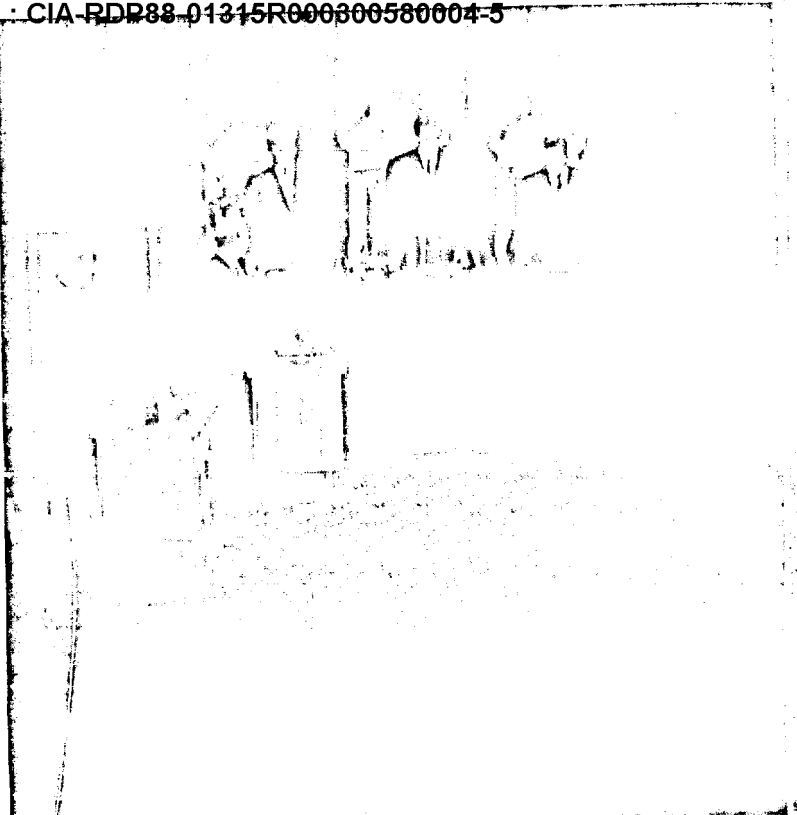
"We may be sure that the Government did not undertake the demonstration trial lightly, since it meant advertising the existence of NTS to the entire population. But evidently the impact of our movement can't be ignored and the Kremlin decided to pay this heavy price. Millions of Russians will now listen more attentively to our message by radio and printed word. The gist of that message is that revolution is possible. Our homeland will one day throw off its communist chains. The keynotes of our propaganda are love of country and freedom."

That the Soviet dictators are deeply worried by NTS may be deduced from their reactions to its work through the years. More than any other group of Russians in free lands, it has been subjected to terror abroad and the kind of denunciation in the Soviet press we have already quoted. Its members, if caught in Russia—and many have been caught—are jailed or shot. Its radio broadcasts have been the most heavily jammed. Repeatedly Moscow has demanded officially that the British, West German and other governments suppress NTS activities on their soil. In April 1961, for instance, it brought diplomatic pressure on Norway to prevent a scheduled lecture by Dr. Vladimir Poremsky, president of NTS since 1955. He was consequently denied a visa, but his lecture was read to a large Oslo audience.

Through defectors from both branches of the Soviet Secret Police—the KGB (State Security Committee) and the MVD (Ministry of the Interior)—it is known that they have special departments to deal with the NTS problem. Since the MVD is an internal Soviet police agency, its concern appears to support NTS claims of a substantial following inside the U.S.S.R. In a memorandum to its officials, the MVD called the NTS "a very dangerous organization . . . the only one operating on Soviet territory." [Our italics.]

The NTS, which opposes acts of violence, has itself been the target of relentless Soviet terror. Five times in the last few years bombs were tossed into its Frankfurt, West Germany, headquarters, printing shop and other buildings. Two attempts have been made to blow up the facilities of Radio Free Russia, the NTS broadcasting station. Four leaders were kidnapped and presumably murdered. At least twice Moscow agents have been assigned to assassinate NTS officials. In both cases the agents, trained to kill and equipped with ingenious murder weapons, succumbed to conscience—they defected, warned the appointed victims and, in the end, themselves became active in the NTS.

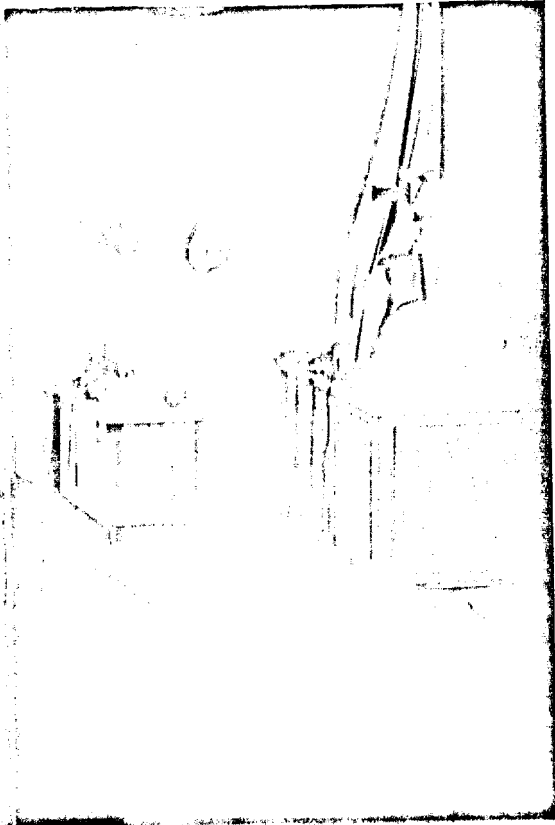
Raw blackmail, in the form of threats against relatives



British teacher Gerald Brooke (in prisoner's dock, at right) assisted NTS while touring in Russia. Arrested, he received five years after Stalin-type "demonstration trial."



To combat NTS, Soviet terror reaches into the Free World. Above, building in West Germany housing Radio Free Russia broadcasting facilities was blasted in 1958. NTS itself opposes acts of violence.



2. Unlike nearly all émigré movements in modern times, NTS rejects liberation of the country from communism by foreign military force. The job, it believes, can and must be done by the Russian peoples themselves through internal revolution. The organization has from time to time accepted foreign financial and logistical support, private and official, but it has never yielded an inch of its independence.

During World War 2, NTS called upon the Russian peoples to fight both the German invaders and the communist regime. The standard Moscow accusation that NTS collaborated with the

Nazis is false. Actually the Germans, distrustful of Russian patriots of any stripe, tried to bar NTS people from Russian territory under their occupation. More than a score of prominent members, the cream of the leadership—among them Baidalakov and Poremsky—were arrested by the German Gestapo in the war years, and half of them perished in concentration camps.

3. The typical émigré society ever since the French Revolution has sought to restore the *ancien régime*. But the NTS wants to bring back neither Czarist absolutism nor the old economic order. Its founding in 1930 was a kind of youth



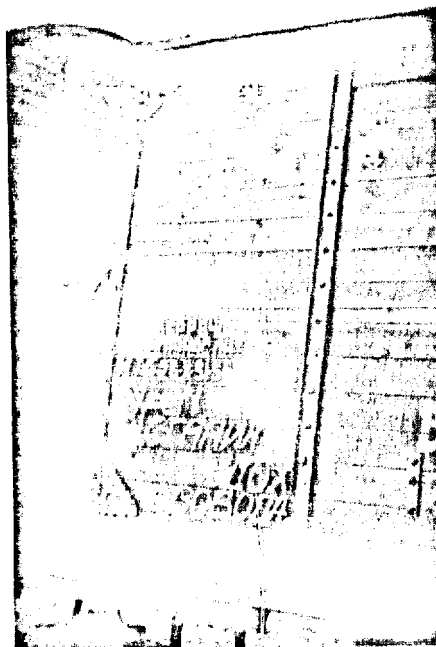
Unidentifiable field operators for Radio Free Russia stop for lunch somewhere near Soviet border. Their mobile truck transmitter sends messages beyond Iron Curtain.

living in Russia, has been used in a few instances successfully—to turn NTS members into counteragents. Without doubt the organization has been infiltrated by Soviet police, just as Czarist agents had infiltrated Lenin's party. In a sense it is a left-handed compliment. As a practical matter, however, there is little the planted Soviet agents can do to affect basic operations.

Every great upheaval since the French Revolution has produced emigration and exile societies seeking to overthrow the new regime. NTS is the most remarkable such organization in the history of revolutions, unique in a number of vital respects:

1. Émigré societies, including the Russian varieties, have been notoriously short-lived, killed off by frustration and internal squabbles. NTS, already 35 years old, has been the most durable. Some of its present activists are sons and daughters of Russian refugees who founded the organization in Belgrade in 1930.

It shows no signs of aging or fatigue and is geared for a long pull. Its present head was among the founders, as was his predecessor, Victor Baidalakov. Although convinced that revolution inside Russia is inevitable, NTS neither expects nor promises one around the corner. Instead, it is content to prepare Russians psychologically and morally to take advantage of a revolutionary situation when it is ripe.



Inscription on Soviet boxcar offers blunt evidence of NTS efforts. Message reads: "NTS. Hurrah! Stalin is dead! NTS—Freedom." Underground's symbol is included.

revolt against a first generation of émigrés, particularly its military contingents, passionately determined to restore the Russian Royal family. In the early years, in fact, no one over 35 was admitted to membership, in order to avoid control by old-line politicians of any persuasion.

Convinced that merely negative anti-Soviet sentiment was not enough, NTS offered a positive alternative to communism which it called Solidarism: a program based on the solidarity of all citizens rather than class conflicts. While this program has been altered through the decades, its basic tenets have remained unchanged.

Politically, NTS seeks a democratic and representative government, whether a republic or a constitutional monarchy. On the thorny "nationalities problem," it strongly favors a confederation of free and equal members, but it recognizes the right of non-Russian peoples (Ukrainians, Georgians, etc.) to determine their own future when conditions guarantee-

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(Continued from page 11)

ing free expression and suffrage are established. In the economic field, Solidarity foresees a mixed system, with major industries and utilities run by the state and private enterprise in all other areas. Agriculture, in the NTS blueprint, would be based on full ownership of the land by those who cultivate it.

While earnestly propagating its own ideology, the organization denies any intention of imposing it, comes the revolution. The liberated peoples will make their own decisions through democratic processes. They will even be able to salvage any desirable social progress developed under the Soviets, provided they are consistent with personal freedoms.

4. To meet the conditions of total espionage and terror of a communist police state, NTS has worked out for the homeland an unprecedented type of organization, what it calls a "molecular" system. This rests on cells of two or at most three members, each one completely unknown to the others. In addition, an individual may constitute himself a cell-of-one by taking the prescribed oath in his mind.

The oath, repeated in almost every NTS broadcast and in much of the literature infiltrated into the country, reads: "As a true and honest son of Russia, I give my word and swear to serve faithfully and devotedly, no matter what happens, the cause of Russia's freedom. I swear to be guided in everything I do by the honor and welfare of my Motherland and, at any cost, to carry out the instructions of the Revolutionary Staff of the NTS throughout the whole period of the revolutionary struggle."

Obviously the NTS cannot know the size of its following inside the U.S.S.R.—neither can the Soviet security outfits. It does know that cells exist and proliferate. Hundreds of letters, necessarily anonymous, reach NTS from the homeland. In personal contacts—with Soviet sailors, tourists, scientists, writers, even officials—NTS activists abroad obtain indications that their broadcasts are heard, their leaflets are read.

"We have sporadic contacts with hundreds of cells," Dr. Poremsky recently told the writer. "Many of these were formed during the German occupation. Our people continue to get into Russia at the risk of their lives and report back to us. Friends in Poland and other communist-captive countries help us maintain contacts. We estimate that the cells run into tens of thousands, and around them are vast numbers of sympathizers."

The secret cells are instructed to make their existence—but never their identity—known to one another and thus overcome to some extent the sense of isolation. When NTSers find the organization's literature around their factory or mine, or NTS stickers on walls and park benches, when they see the NTS emblem chalked on walls, they realize that they are not alone. The emblem is a three-pronged "pitchfork" or trident, the prongs symbolizing workers, peasants and intellectuals.

The "molecular underground" is something quite new in the annals of revolutionary activity. It is a resistance movement that takes its guidance from a revolutionary staff beyond the frontiers

possible against a modern totalitarian state. The theory is that when a revolution breaks out, the molecules will surface and coalesce as a powerful like-minded movement capable of providing leadership and heading off chaos.

NTS makes up for its small numbers and lack of money by exceptional ingenuity, imagination and daring.

From the beginning the printed word, "paper bullets," was its chief weapon, though in the last ten years the spoken word—through Radio Free Russia—has become increasingly important. NTS presses, now centralized in Frankfurt, in the 35 years of its existence have turned out incalculable quantities of printed matter for the emigration, for Soviet soldiers and other personnel stationed abroad, and most importantly, for smuggling into Russia. The output ranges from stamp-size slogans (gummed on the back for affixing to walls) to small, featherweight books. The main printed items have been miniature leaflets, four by six inches or smaller. These scraps of closely-printed colored tissue paper, millions of them, are the easiest to infiltrate, to conceal and to scatter.

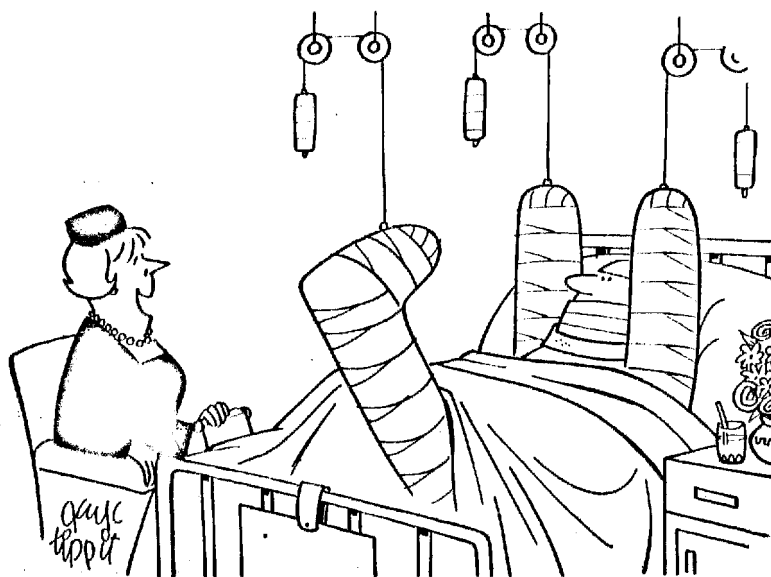
NTS propaganda has often been camouflaged to look like Soviet newspapers, standard Russian classics and even paper money. The idea is to reduce the element of risk for those who take the illicit reading matter home or pass it on to others.

THE FRONT PAGE of the bogus newspaper looks exactly like Izvestia or some other domestic daily—the other pages are crammed with political discussion and instructions for forming cells.

Here is a 74-page paperback that appears to be, outwardly, a familiar Soviet edition of Gogol's "The Inspector General," but contains an essay on revolution by Dr. Poremsky. One can imagine the shock—or thrill—to a Soviet citizen who expects Gogol and begins to read the opening lines: "National revolution hammers at the door. Communism in our country is an empty sound."

On some street or road people pick up what look like ten-ruble notes only to discover an eloquent NTS message on the other side. No doubt most of them are disappointed, but a few are cheered by the vision of eventual liberation and freedom.

For Russians in the free world the NTS puts out an array of publications, with micro-editions in some cases for circulation inside Russia. There is a news weekly, Possev; two political and literary quarterlies and a magazine for young people. A number of anti-Soviet books by Soviet authors in Russia's "literary underground" have seen first publication in NTS periodicals.



"Our half-painted roof is the talk of the neighborhood."

The principal problem has been how to get the "paper bullets" into the homeland. Unwitting tributes to NTS ingenuity have appeared in the Soviet press from time to time. Thus Sovietskaya Byelorussia, on September 14, 1963, complained:

"Packed into goods imported into the U.S.S.R.—even in crates with machinery—one often finds a variety of subversive literature. During a period of slightly more than two years 420,000 aerial balloons carrying a load of 250 million slanderous leaflets have penetrated into the socialist countries."

This hail of paper is blamed on "imperialist nations" but the culprit is clearly the NTS.

The weapons Gerald Brooke had brought into the country, according to the Moscow paper Trud (July 23, 1965) were "more disgusting" than "bombs, foreign money or narcotics," since they were "of a so-called ideological character—anti-Soviet literature, leaflets and the means for their duplications." A startling admission that the Moscow dictators consider ideas more dangerous than terror weapons.

WHEN RED STAR complained about anti-Soviet propaganda by air and on land, it could have added water for completeness. Even the river currents are used to float NTS propaganda into Russia. Confederates behind the Iron Curtain toss packets of pamphlets in vacuum-sealed plastic containers into rivers that flow into the Black Sea. A note on each package reads, "Either give this to a Russian or throw it back into the river." Friendly sailors on foreign ships in Soviet ports have also launched such packets.

The first NTS experiments with balloons were made in 1935. Since then the techniques have been highly developed. Expert meteorologists study the air currents—luckily the flow is from west to east—to chart courses for huge balloons scientifically geared to release and scatter vast quantities of leaflets as they pass over populated areas. In recent years delivery by balloon has tapered off, as more direct methods have been evolved.

Letters to individuals in Russia make up a major activity. This involves continuous collection of names and addresses from every possible source. With more than 2 million foreign letters reaching the U.S.S.R. annually, the police cannot possibly open them all and most of the NTS mail gets through. The letters posted inside the country by volunteers like Gerald Brooke are only a small part of the total. According to NTS spokesmen, the Brooke case, far from discouraging foreign friends, has increased the number of volunteers to carry on his work.

In the last decade there has been a systematic effort to contact directly Soviet citizens abroad: seamen in free-world ports, tourists, exchange delegations, occupation troops and the like. NTS'ers are rebuffed by some, but a minority listens with interest and accepts the proffered printed matter.

"Among 5000 such interviews during a year," an NTS organization brochure states, "about 15% were party-line communists, the great majority neutral or sympathetic to NTS and 15% became active NTS supporters."

Presumably such claims of success are exaggerated. But Moscow has not concealed its anxiety over the person-to-person campaign. Soon after it got going, in 1957, the Soviet Embassy in London lodged a formal protest against the "hostile activities" of "a group of criminal elements calling themselves NTS." Before long the official organ of the merchant marine, Water Transport, was warning seamen, under the flaring headline, "Be Vigilant, Soviet Sailor!", to refuse to talk to NTS "criminals." During the Brussels World's Fair, the Soviet Government complained to the Belgian Foreign Office about NTS "molestation" of the thousands of Soviet visitors.

The NTS Radio Free Russia first went on the air in December 1950, with a clandestine mobile transmitter in a heavy truck. The vehicle moved stealthily through the woods along the Iron Curtain and beamed its programs primarily to Soviet troops in satellite countries. Two such mobile transmitters are still in use, but NTS now has a fixed station strong enough to penetrate as far as the Urals. By arrangements with friendly stations in South Korea and Taiwan, Radio Free Russia also broadcasts to Siberia and the Soviet Far East.

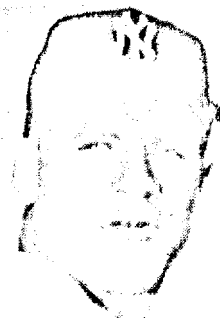
THROUGH the years the station has worked out ingenious methods for overcoming the massive jamming. It has learned to use wave lengths so close to regular Soviet channels that they cannot be jammed without blotting out domestic programs. Specialists even insinuate their messages into the momentary pauses in Soviet broadcasts.

One night, for instance, an opera was being broadcast to the country from Moscow. As usual, an intermission was given over to a propaganda-packed news program. Suddenly, as the announcer paused for breath, three words came over the loud-speaker: "Long live freedom!" One can imagine how startled the listeners were—a voice from the outside world! NTS officials, monitoring the program in Germany, knew that the method worked.

Anonymous letters from listeners indi-

(Continued on page 40)

# Want to STOP SMOKING here's how!



by Whitey Ford

The famous Major League pitcher who holds the most World Series records tells what happened when he decided smoking was not good for his physical fitness.

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## THE UNDERGROUND MOSCOW FEARS MOST

cate that Radio Free Russia is heard in varying degrees. And again confirmation comes in Soviet press attacks on the broadcasts. The Kremlin is too wily to advertise an anti-Soviet station if it were not being listened to.

The zeal of NTS in exploiting opportunities to reach the minds of Russians has been dramatically illustrated in relation to Cuba. Golos Rodiny, a Soviet newspaper in East Germany addressed to Russian émigrés, was moved to write indignantly: "From the moment the Cuban conflict started, this 'Voice of a Free Russia' has been croaking lies to disturb Soviet citizens in Cuba."

Actually Radio Free Russia, since November 1962, has been beaming Russian-language broadcasts to Soviet technicians and military personnel in Cuba over the clandestine Radio Libertad in the Caribbean. Constantin Boldyreff, who directs this enterprise, has had ample evidence in letters and through Russian defectors that his broadcasts are reaching their target.

In the autumn of 1956, a Soviet newspaper even charged that "the NTS played an obnoxious role in unleashing the Hungarian counter-revolution." There was some color of truth in that flattering accusation. During the crisis, NTS concentrated its radio and other facilities to persuade Soviet troops in Hungary not to shoot at Freedom Fighters and if possible to join their ranks—as, in fact, many Russians did.

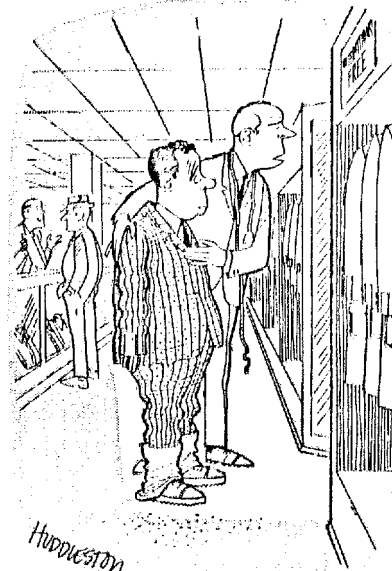
As for radio, perhaps the most remarkable fact about the whole operation, including the Far East and Cuba operations, is that it is maintained on a yearly budget of only \$50,000. This contrasts dramatically with budgets of many millions for official and crypto-official stations—far more powerful, of course—broadcasting to the U.S.S.R. While these well-financed stations have staffs numbering in the hundreds, many of them drawing lush salaries, Radio Free Russia manages with only 22 men and women who receive barely enough to live on.

INCLUDING ITS radio staff, NTS has only about 100 full-time employees in the free world. All of them, from the 16 men on its Council or Revolutionary Staff to the lowliest mechanic, receive the same basic wage of \$125 a month, adjusted upward accordingly for large families. It is able to carry on with such limited manpower because hundreds of devoted volunteers do most of the work.

By coincidence, both Dr. Poremsky and his predecessor, Victor Baidalakov, are chemical engineers. They renounced the possibility of profitable careers to labor, on meager wages, for the libera-

tion of their native land from communism. This is typical for most of their colleagues. The organization is supported by contributions from members and sympathizers in the emigration, as well as gifts from expatriate Russian and foreign friends and organizations.

"We urgently need financial help," a top NTS official told the writer. "For all of the Russian patriots engaged in our movement, it is a solemn dedication, never a job. Yet we find ourselves, again and again, stymied or even forced to



"For only \$49.95, with two pair of trousers, I should see a smile of satisfaction spread from ear to ear on that handsome, intelligent face."

THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE

drop important activities for lack of funds."

No one can guess what role, if any, NTS and its "molecular underground" will play in Russia's future. But clearly the Soviet dictators do not discount their menace to the regime. The men in the Kremlin can never forget that Lenin's organization, in the decades before 1917, was even smaller and less known—and they probably see an alarming parallel between the temper of the NTS and the early Leninist Party in terms of personal austerity, fanatic devotion and faith in their cause.

THE END

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